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ABSTRACT

This book is the third in a series of six pocket-sized books written for career changers and laid-off workers. Each book is written at a 7th- to 10th-grade reading level and contains examples, hands-on self-discovery exercises, and step-by-step advice for a successful job search. This book identifies steps for finding the unadvertised jobs--80-95 percent of all jobs. Chapter 1 describes what the hidden job market is. Chapter 2 provides steps to build a network of people who can help. Chapter 3 outlines the three parts to a successful plan to use the hidden job market: research the market, create a schedule of contacts, and participate in the industry. Chapter 4 teaches how to use tools of the hidden job market. It provides samples of the following: letters of introduction; follow-up call; thank-you letter; card file/contact page; to-do list; and calendar page. Chapter 5 suggests the usefulness of good manners. Other contents include a bibliography of 11 helpful books for job seekers and an index. (YLB)

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Cracking the Hidden Job Market

Pocket Job Series No. 3

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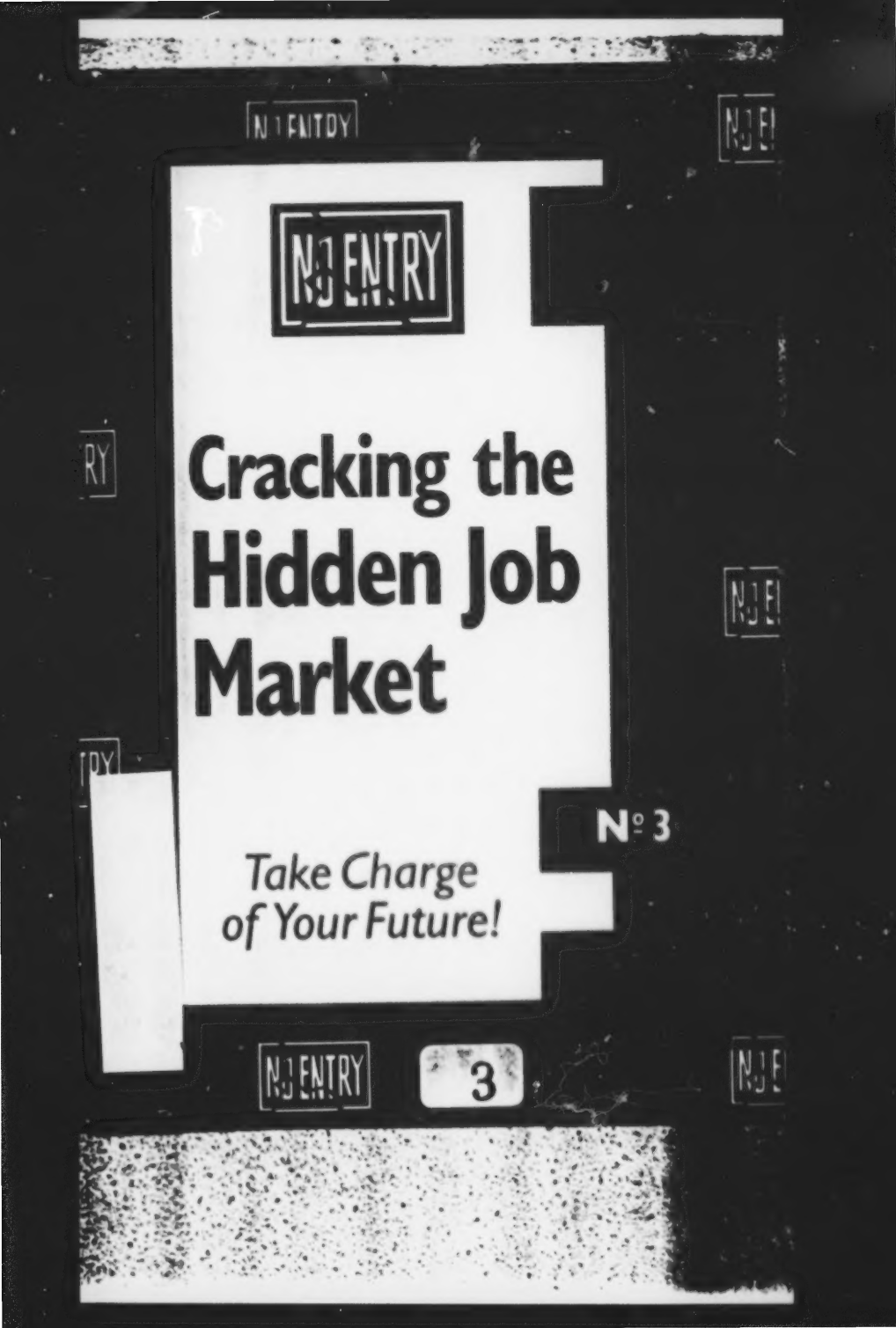
NO 1 ENTRY
Cracking the Hidden Job Market
No 3
Take Charge of Your Future!
3

About the Author

Amy Lindgren is the founder and president of ProtoType Career Services, a 10-year-old firm specializing in laid-off workers and career-changers. ProtoType serves up to 2,000 people a year in workshops and individual sessions. Ms. Lindgren also trains other counselors in serving laid-off workers, and is the author of more than 300 published articles.

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4

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction 2

CHAPTER ONE: What Is This Hidden Job Market? 3

Is it for real? 3

Why don't they advertise? 5

So how do they find people? 8

How do I use the Hidden Job Market? 10

CHAPTER TWO: Building Your Network 12

Start with people you know 12

Add the people you should know 20

Add opportunities to meet people 22

CHAPTER THREE: Find Those Hidden Jobs 27

Research the market 27

Create a contact schedule 29

Participate and contribute 34

CHAPTER FOUR: Tools of the Hidden Job Market 38

Letters of introduction — 3 samples 38

Follow-up call — 2 samples 46

Thank you letter — 1 sample 50

Card file/contact page — 2 samples 52

To do list — 1 sample 54

Calendar page — 3 samples 56

CHAPTER FIVE: Mind Your Manners 60

Bibliography 63

Index 64

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever applied for a job, only to find it was given to someone who knew the boss? Have you ever told a friend or neighbor about an opening before it was advertised? Has anyone ever "put in a word" for you for an interview or promotion?

These are all examples of the Hidden Job Market. Dozens of studies in cities throughout the United States show a startling truth:

80-95% OF ALL JOB OPENINGS ARE NOT ADVERTISED IN THE NEWSPAPER

That means 4 out of 5 jobs that are open right now are "hidden." These are good jobs, with good pay.

If you want to find a better job faster, turn the page. Learn how to Crack the Hidden Job Market.

Chapter ONE

What is This Hidden Job Market?

IS IT FOR REAL?

Before you can find the hidden job market, you must believe it exists. Because it does. But if you approach this opportunity half-heartedly, you'll get very little back for your effort.

So ask yourself: Have I already used the hidden job market? You have if:

- Someone told you about a job before it was advertised
- You told someone else about an unadvertised job
- An employer created or adjusted a job to fit your skills or personality
- You or someone you know was hired because of knowing the boss
- Someone thought of you when they created a new job or department.

The hidden job market is based on relationships. You've heard it before:

IT'S NOT WHAT YOU KNOW; IT'S WHO YOU KNOW

That's the truth. Is it fair? Actually, yes. Think about it: It's impossible to know everything needed for the job. Besides, not all of us can afford the time or money to get new training.

But we can all make friends. That gift is there for everyone, rich or poor, young or old, smart or not-so-smart. We can all learn to meet people and ask for the help we need.

Still not convinced? Think about this story.

Joe Jackson is a supervisor in a lawn care company. He wants to hire an assistant to care for his customers' lawns and to make sales. He runs an ad asking for lawn care and sales experience. Eighty people apply, but only 4 or 5 have the experience he asked for. After interviewing them, Joe is leaning toward Harvey Smith because he is the best qualified. But Harvey

isn't very pleasant and Joe wonders if he'll offend the customers with his negative attitude. Joe decides to put the hiring on hold for now.

Meanwhile, a friend of Joe's meets a fellow named Tod Welski, who used to work in a hardware store. Tod doesn't know much about lawn care, but he's in good shape and he's great with people. The friend introduces Tod and Joe, who hit it off right away. After talking to Tod, Joe realizes he can train him to do the job. He also realizes Harvey is wrong for the job, even though he's better qualified than Tod. Joe offers the job to Tod, who never even applied. In fact, if Tod had applied, he wouldn't have been interviewed, because he didn't have the skills required.

Joe feels very lucky to have met Tod and Tod is thrilled to have a job where he can use his "people" skills. Meanwhile, Harvey is still answering ads.

WHY DON'T THEY ADVERTISE?

Even though Joe Jackson did advertise, he found Tod through a friend. His ad didn't

work because he asked for years of lawn care experience and sales ability. What he really wanted was a good attitude, friendly personality, ability to learn, and loyalty. So why didn't he put that in the ad?

Can you imagine? Everyone in the country thinks they have those qualities. Joe would have been flooded with applications!

This may sound like a silly problem, but it's very real to employers. They can't ask for what they really want because it's impossible to measure. You can't get a degree in friendliness or problem-solving.

That's one reason why more than 80% of jobs aren't advertised. Employers know they won't get the people they really want.

Here are some of the other reasons:

Too expensive — Ads can cost up to $500 a week in some cities.

Time-consuming — When you advertise, you create several steps: sorting through

resumes, interviewing candidates, conducting second interviews, checking references, etc. It can take several months to make a hire, and some employers can't wait.

Labor intensive — All that interviewing and reference checking can tie up staff for days at a time.

Too risky — Despite the reference checks and interviews, an employer is usually deciding which stranger to hire. They're going to give keys to the cash register or company truck to a stranger? Would you?

Too confidential — Sometimes the company wants to keep the opening a secret from competitors, other staff members, creditors, etc.

Too disorganized — Surprisingly, a job may not be advertised because it doesn't really exist yet. The supervisor is so busy, he or she hasn't had time to ask for help. They won't place an ad, but they'd certainly talk to someone who offers to help.

Too soon — Many jobs are filled before

they're advertised by workers the employer met earlier. In other words, a job may not be advertised because it's not open yet. But the employer knows who will get the job when there is an opening.

There may be more reasons why an employer wouldn't advertise, but you get the idea. There are exceptions to the rule. Government employers, such as the state or county, must advertise all positions. Private companies with certain government contracts must also advertise. And many companies have policies that say they must advertise.

Nevertheless, remember: whenever possible, the employer will hire without going through the inconvenience and uncertainty of advertising. Like you, the boss wants to make the best decision with the least hassle.

SO HOW DO THEY FIND PEOPLE?

Every employer has his or her own tricks for finding good employees. Some will ask their current employees to refer their

friends and family. Other employers ask their friends in other companies for suggestions. Still others will ask for candidates at their Chamber of Commerce meeting, in their industry newsletter, or even by posting a sign on their door. Many companies recruit workers by asking local high schools and colleges to send them applicants. Companies may also work through an agency, such as a temporary help firm, contract house, or headhunter, to find their workers.

Chances are, you won't be able to guess an employer's favorite trick. You'll have to stumble onto it while pursuing several possibilities. Remember the saying:

YOU'VE GOT TO BE IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME

Is that just a matter of luck? No way! To make it work, you've got to be in a lot of places, a lot of the time. The "right place" is almost never going to be your couch, so get going!

OK, I BELIEVE! HOW DO I USE THE HIDDEN JOB MARKET?

To use the hidden job market, you need only two things, but you need them both. A one-wheel bicycle is pretty tough to ride!

1. A Goal. You need to know what you want, or else you can't ask for it. There are literally thousands of jobs open around you. Saying "I'll take anything" doesn't work, and it isn't true. If it were true, you would already have a job.

So what do you want? Practice filling in these blanks:

"I'd like a job as a_____."(sales representative, janitor, chef, etc.)

or

"I'd like a job with the_____Company."

or

"I'd like to work within_____blocks of my house. I really will do anything if I can walk to work."

or

"I'd like to work in the_____industry." (health care, automotive, hotel, etc.)

Remember: People can't help you until you tell them what you want.

2. People. The hidden job market is just people talking to people. That's all it is. So you need people to talk to. Lots of them. People in the field, people who know you, people you just met, people who know people who are hiring... the more people you talk to about your goal, the more doors you will open to the hidden job market.

Don't worry — this book will help you find the people you need. The next chapter tells you how to identify the people who can help you, and Chapters 3 and 4 will show you ways to ask for that help.

But you have to start by doing your own goal-setting. If you've got a goal in mind, you're ready to get started. Turn the page!

Chapter TWO

Building Your Network

START WITH PEOPLE YOU KNOW

This is the easy part. On the next few pages, simply list all the people you know. There probably won't be room for all of them, so grab some extra paper before you start.

And don't worry! You won't be pestering them or embarrassing yourself. You might not even contact them all. But you need the list to get started.

1. Neighbors (current and former)

Name Phone #

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. Family members (include in-laws, out-of-state relatives, everyone)

Name Phone #

17

3. Friends (current and former)

Name Phone #

18

4. Former co-workers

Name Phone #

19

5. Buddies (craft clubs, sports teams, etc.)

Name Phone #

20

6. Friends of friends

Name Phone #

7. Community (church, PTA, Little League parents, etc.)

Name Phone #

22

8. People who serve you (barber, lawyer, day care provider, accountant, etc.)

Name Phone #

ADD THE PEOPLE YOU SHOULD KNOW

Did you surprise yourself with how many people you know? Most adults can list 100 or more people! But not everyone will be equally helpful. Now you need to think of "types" of people — people who could probably help, who you may not know yet.

For example, if you want to work in a hospital, ask yourself: Who might know of openings, or know the supervisors in different departments? Anyone who works there now is a good person to meet. So is anyone who "serves" the hospital, such as employees of the linen company, the cafeteria suppliers, the security company, the medical equipment suppliers, the lab services, the chaplains, etc. There are hundreds of people who work in hospitals each day but are employees of other companies. They might know of openings and supervisors at the hospital.

Now you try it.

People I should know

My job search goal: _____

Types of people who would know of openings or supervisors

Title	Name	Phone

ADD OPPORTUNITIES TO MEET PEOPLE

Now you know the types of people to meet. How will you actually meet them? Remember the rule:

YOU HAVE TO BE IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME

That means you have to be in a lot of places! Here are some ideas to get you started. Don't worry about how you'll meet people — we'll talk about that in the next chapter. For now, concentrate on where to meet these people.

Business meetings — Does your industry have association or club meetings where people in that field get together? For example, most large cities have computer clubs, purchasing associations, secretarial associations, etc. In fact, medium-sized metropolitan areas may have 300 or more business clubs. To find one in your industry, look in the library for a book on professional associations. Or ask someone in the field. Don't

forget to put the Chamber of Commerce meetings on your list.

Club meetings — Your town probably has several clubs that attract people from all career areas. Examples would be Shriners, Jaycees, Eagles, Moose, VFW, Rotary and American Legion. Check eligibility requirements and ask to attend a couple of meetings as a guest.

Community meetings — For some jobs you'll find the people you want to meet at community events, like school board meetings, legislative hearings, or even church meetings.

Schools — Does your local college or high school offer classes in your field? The instructor might be someone you want to meet. Teachers often hear about openings in their field, and they usually know the new developments in the industry. They also know the area leaders in the field. Consider taking a class. You will learn something, and you will meet people who share your interest and who know others in the field.

Volunteer positions — Volunteering for a non-profit organization in your field will introduce you to lots of people at all levels. You'd be surprised how many high-level people volunteer. It's a good chance to meet them on an informal basis.

Open houses — Watch the papers for any business open houses in your field. You are bound to meet other people in the industry, as well as the officials at the sponsoring company.

Tours — Many companies give public tours. This is a good way to see a company's "public face" and to meet at least one person there.

Part-time jobs — You may decide you need a part-time job while you're job-hunting. If so, take something in your field. For example, carpenters should work in lumber yards or hardware stores, not at gas stations or libraries. You want to be where the most people in your field are likely to show up, and where you're learning something you can use later.

Holiday parties — While you're job hunting, accept every invitation you can. Even holiday parties and baby showers can be good places to learn about openings or meet people in other companies. Remember: the more people see you, the more they will remember you when a job comes up.

Introductions — Your friends or neighbors may know someone you want to know. Ask for their help in introducing you. Or ask to use their name to introduce yourself.

Cold calls — You can "meet" someone over the phone by just calling and introducing yourself. This takes courage, but it can be very effective. You can also meet people by dropping in on them at work. This is less effective because of the interruption it causes. Still, it can work in companies where the manager expects interruptions, such as retail stores, restaurants and auto centers.

Now you try it. Use the next page to note some of the meetings you might want to attend, to meet people who can help you in your job search.

Meetings I should attend

Meeting	Date/Time	Contact Person

Chapter THREE

Finding Those Hidden Jobs

Now you've got your two ingredients for the hidden job market: **A Goal** and **People**. It's time to put them together to create a strategy.

There are 3 parts to a successful plan to use the hidden job market:

1. Research the market (industry or neighborhood)
2. Create a schedule of contacts
3. Participate in the industry

RESEARCH THE MARKET

Before you start meeting people, you need to know something about the industry or neighborhood you want to work in. The more you know, the better your conversations with these people will be. And the more impressed they'll be with you!

Here are some basic ways to get information

about a company, industry, or neighborhood.

Books — There may be a book (or dozens) about the subject of your interest. Check at the library.

Magazines — There almost certainly is a trade magazine written for the industry, or a community newspaper for the neighborhood. For example, there are magazines just for truckers, for grocers, for insurance people, for teachers, etc. Check at the library. If they don't carry the magazine, they might be able to give you the publisher's number so you can call and ask for back issues.

Newspaper articles — Back to the library. Most U.S. counties now have at least one library (it may be at your local college) that can help you find newspaper articles on the computer. You can read articles from all over the country about the industry or company you're researching.

Newsletters — Business clubs often have

newsletters for their fields. So do many companies, and some consumer groups. At the library, ask for a reference book listing newsletters by category. Or call the business club in your field and ask for newsletters they may produce.

Product research — You can learn of new developments in the field by calling the companies that make equipment or tools you would use on the job. For example, a computer programmer could ask software and computer makers to send information about new products.

Company research — Many companies are pleased to send information and even sample products to people who ask. Call the public relations or sales department and ask for such things as: annual reports, company newsletters, articles, catalogs, spec. sheets and samples.

CREATE A CONTACT SCHEDULE

Now that you know something about your area of interest, you're ready to meet people.

Remember the lists of people you made in Chapter 2? Perhaps you added some names while you were doing research. You also need the list of meetings you made in that chapter. It's time now to organize these lists into a plan for entering the hidden job market.

People will be able to help you in different ways. Some of the people on your lists will have a job opening for you (eventually). Some of the people will know other people who will have a job for you. And some of the people on your list will know about the industry or companies you're interested in.

Go back through your lists of people and put a number by each name. Try this method of classifying them.

1 = possible **employers**
2 = **"locators"** — people who might know possible employers
3 = **"teachers"** — people who know a lot about the field

4 = **"helpers"** — people who may not know anyone in the field, but who want to help you

It's ok to use more than one number beside some of the names.

Now look over your lists of people again. How many 1's do you have? Number 2's and 3's? The goal is to add more 1's, because these are the people who can hire you. To do that, you usually need a lot of 2's and 3's, since these are the people who help you find the employers.

To make the hidden job market work for you, you need to make a plan to meet and talk to lots of people in all these categories. The best plan is based on quantity of contacts per week. In other words, it's best to set a goal for the number of people to meet or talk to each week.

Here's a sample schedule.

Week 1

4's – Talk to 10 "helpers," ask them to keep their eyes open for contacts and leads in your industry or neighborhood.

3's – Talk to 2 "teachers," meet to learn more about the field

2's – Talk to 5 "locators," ask for names of employers in the field

1's – Talk to 3 employers, ask to schedule an interview

Week 2

4's – Talk to 10 "helpers"

3's – Talk to 2 "teachers"

2's – Talk to 5 "locators"

1's – Talk to 3 employers

Week 3

4's – Talk to 10 "helpers"

3's – Talk to 2 "teachers"

2's – Talk to 5 "locators"

1's – Talk to 3 employers

Attend 1-2 interviews with employers

Week 4

4's – Talk to 10 "helpers"

3's – Talk to 1 "teacher"
2's – Talk to 5 "locators"
Talk again to 5 "locators" from week 1
1's – Talk to 3 employers
Attend 1-2 interviews with employers
Attend a business or community meeting to meet new "locators," "helpers" or employers

As you can see, you'll soon be very busy! In a slow week, you'll talk to at least 20 people about your job goal. By weeks 3 and 4, you'll be going on interviews and attending meetings in the community. The community and business meetings are important. Without them, you'll soon run out of people to contact. It's also important to follow up with each person by calling or writing to them again. Without follow-up, the first contact is wasted. They may forget about you or lose your name.

Now look at your list of meetings from Chapter 2. Put a letter next to each meeting, like this:

A = **"Can't miss"** meetings, full of people in your industry. Possibly business clubs.

B = **"Helper"** meetings, attended by people who might be able to help you. Possibly community or church groups.

C = **"Fun"** meetings you'd like to join for your own interests. Any hobby, sport or special interest.

The trick is to attend at least one meeting a week. Any more might be exhausting, but fewer won't produce enough contacts. Meetings are important sources of people who can be your helpers, teachers, locators and even employers. Plan to attend at least one meeting in each category each month.

Never forget your reason for attending: To ask each person you meet for a job opening or a person to contact. You'll discover many unadvertised jobs this way!

PARTICIPATE AND CONTRIBUTE

The best way to get a job from the hidden

job market is to have that job come to you. If you meet enough people, tell them your goal, and ask for their help, you will begin to hear about unadvertised jobs.

That's good.

But if you get involved in the groups, or help an employer, they'll call you with a job offer.

That's much better.

It makes sense when you think about it. Who will make a better impression on a future employer: someone who attends a meeting, or someone who helps run the meeting? Someone who participates in a charity event, or someone who helps run the event?

In both cases, the person who gets involved is more impressive. They stand out more, but they're also learning and helping more. Employers like people who are active and helpful.

39

Following are some ways to get involved:

Join committees — If your group needs a committee for publicity, fundraising, or to plan the annual meeting, ask to join. You will work next to people who are employed, and you will meet people in other businesses and learn new things about your industry.

Join boards — Nearly every business club or community group is governed by a board. This is a good opportunity to rub shoulders with leaders in your field while learning more about leadership yourself.

Be a consultant or contractor — An employer may need a hand, but not have a job opening. Offer to help them with a short-term problem and they will remember you later.

Write articles – if you like to write, contribute short articles to the industry newsletter or magazine. Or help put the newsletter together. Your name will become familiar to everyone who reads the newsletter.

Be a speaker — Most business clubs ask members to speak about their specialty. What can you demonstrate or explain for the other members? Be creative and have fun.

Volunteer for special events — Does your school board run an annual carnival? This year, sign up to be a clown or to help with refreshments. Lend a hand with special events and people will think well of you for years to come.

Why are you going to all this trouble? Isn't it enough to just attend these meetings? Yes, it may be "enough." But you will reach your goal quicker if more people know you. Remember this rule of job search:

PEOPLE HIRE PEOPLE THEY LIKE

Employers have a better chance of liking you if they know you. So participate! Contribute!

41

Chapter FOUR

Tools of the Hidden Job Market

The proper tools make any task easier. In the hidden job market, those tools include letters of introduction, follow-up calls, thank-you letters, contact notebooks or card files, a calendar, and of course, a resume.

In this chapter you will learn about how to use most of these tools. The resume is not included here. To learn more about resumes, look for the book ***Resumes Etc.*** in the Pocket Job Series.

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

This is a brief letter introducing you to the "locator," "teacher," or employer. In this letter, you explain your job goal, summarize your qualifications for the job, and ask for their help.

If you're writing to a "locator," you would ask for names of people who might have jobs for you. Then you would write another letter to those people.

If you're writing to a "teacher," you would ask for a meeting where you can ask questions to learn more about the industry. These meetings are sometimes called informational interviews.

And, if you're writing to an employer, you would ask for a meeting where you can learn more about their company and tell them about yourself. This may be a job interview, or a pre-interview meeting. Sending a resume is optional at this point, but it probably wouldn't hurt.

Remember: It doesn't matter if the employer doesn't have a job open now. You still want to meet because you know a job will eventually become available at that company.

Following is a sample of each type of letter.

43

SAMPLE INTRODUCTORY LETTER I

To a "Locator"

February 17, 1995

Sandy Jackson
Chief of Housing Permits
Rochester County
2211 W. Main Road
Wilmington, Missouri 33533

44

Dear Ms. Jackson:

I am writing to introduce myself and ask for your advice. After 10 years as a carpenter, I am now completing classes to be a housing inspector.

As the Chief of Housing Permits for Rochester County, you are in a position to talk with lots of people. Do you know of any companies in the building trades that need an inspector with a background in home-building? I am looking for any leads you may have on current or future openings in our industry.

Thank you in advance for your help, Ms. Jackson. I've enclosed a resume for your reference. I'll call next week to touch base and to see if anything came to mind.

Sincerely,

Terry Jones

Terry Jones
5545 Second Street N.
Wilmington, Missouri 33533
(222) 999-3333

45

SAMPLE INTRODUCTORY LETTER 2

To a "Teacher"

February 17, 1995

Bill Forman
200 Second Street
Wilmington, Missouri 33532

Dear Mr. Forman:

I am writing to introduce myself and ask for your advice. I saw you speak at the Housing Conference last month, so I know you went from being a housing inspector to a lobbyist on housing issues.

I am just preparing to enter the housing inspector field after 10 years as a carpenter. When I finish my classes in three months, I will need to choose a company to work for.

That's why I'm writing to you. Could you spare about 30 minutes for me to ask you questions about the local housing industry? Your perspective would help me greatly in my job search this spring.

I will call you next week to find a convenient time to meet. I'm enclosing my resume for your reference.

Thank you,

Terry Jones

Terry Jones
5545 Second Street N.
Wilmington, Missouri 33533
(222) 999-3333

SAMPLE INTRODUCTORY LETTER 3

To an "Employer"

February 17, 1995

Patricia Brown
Community Housing Group
1628 14th Avenue South
Wilmington, Missouri 33530

Dear Ms. Brown:

I am writing to introduce myself and express my interest in working for Community Housing Group.

After 10 years as a carpenter, I have returned to school for my inspector's certificate. I will be ready to work as an inspector after my graduation in three months.

Community Housing Group interests me because of your emphasis on renewing older neighborhoods. Much of my carpentry work was focused on remodeling older houses, so I understand the challenges involved. Will your agency need another inspector in the near future?

I would like to stop by and meet you, even if you don't foresee an opening. I'll call next week to set a time that's convenient for you. I've enclosed a resume for your reference.

Thanks in advance for your time.

Sincerely,

Terry Jones

Terry Jones
5545 Second Street N.
Wilmington, Missouri 33533
(222) 999-3333

FOLLOW-UP CALL

About a week after you send your letter, you need to call to set the meeting time. In your call, refer to the letter, then ask what time this week would be convenient. Do not delay this call! If you wait much more than a week, they will forget about the letter you sent, or even throw it away.

Following is a sample follow-up call.

"Hello, this is Bill Forman."

"Mr. Forman, my name is Terry Jones. I'm a student in the housing inspection program. I sent you a letter last week asking to meet with you."

"You did? Wait a minute. Ok, here it is. What did you want to talk to me about?"

"Well, I saw you speak at the housing conference last month and I liked what you said about community housing. That interests me too. But what I wanted to talk about is the local housing industry. I'm just starting my job search and I

wanted to get your advice."

"Well, I don't know how much help I'd be. I don't know of any jobs that are open."

"That's ok. I'm more interested in your viewpoint right now. I can't start work for a few months anyway, because I'm still in school. But I would sure appreciate your advice."

"How long will this take?"

"I was hoping for about a half-hour of your time. Are you free on Tuesday or Wednesday this week?"

"Ok, come by at 10:30 Tuesday and we'll see what I can tell you."

"Thanks, Mr. Forman. I'll see you at 10:30 Tuesday."

Notice how Terry had to talk Mr. Forman into meeting with him? Mr. Forman wasn't reluctant, but he needed to understand the reason for the meeting. Be prepared to

answer the obvious questions that are likely to come up.

Here's a call that didn't go as well.

"Sandy Jackson's office."

"May I speak with Ms. Jackson please?"

"Just a minute, I'll transfer you."

"Sandy Jackson here."

"Ms. Jackson, my name is Terry Jones. I'm a student in the housing inspection program. I sent you a letter last week."

"Yes, Mr. Jones, I got your letter but I'm afraid I can't help you. I'm much too busy to talk to you about your job search."

"I understand, Ms. Jackson. Before you go, could you tell me who else in your department might have a few ideas for me?"

"Well... hmmm. Try calling Jack Wong. He's

out today, but he might be able to help you."

"Jack Wong, W-O-N-G?"

"That's right. Now I really have to go."

"Thank you very much Ms. Jackson. I really appreciate your help."

Even though Ms. Jackson was in a hurry and didn't want to help, Terry got another contact to try. He didn't take it personally, because he knows what it's like to be very busy. Besides, Terry did achieve one of his goals: he got a new name from Ms. Jackson. Now he can write to Jack Wong, or call him. When Terry calls or writes to Mr. Wong, he'll start with "Ms. Jackson in your office suggested I contact you..." That will get Mr. Wong's attention and make this contact go more smoothly.

Remember: Try to get something from every call, even if it's just another person's name. Each name is a step leading to your next job.

THANK-YOU LETTER

After each visit, and even after some calls, take a minute to write a thank-you letter. These letters can be typed or handwritten, as long as they're neat enough to read. Send them promptly, within a few days of the conversation.

Following is a sample thank-you letter.

February 17, 1995

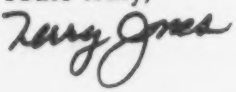
Bill Forman
200 Second Street
Wilmington, Missouri 33532

Dear Mr. Forman:

I can't thank you enough for meeting with me this week. You were very encouraging about the housing industry locally. In fact, I've already contacted two of the people you suggested, Mr. Abernathy and Ms. Sampson. I'll meet with each of them next week.

Again, thank you. I look forward to working on joint projects sometime in the future.

Yours truly,



Terry Jones
5545 Second Street N.
Wilmington, Missouri 33533
(222) 999-3333

55

CARD FILE OR CONTACT PAGE

Each person you meet should have their own card or page in your records. You can use a box with index cards, a notebook, a 3-ring binder, or any other method of tracking your contacts. This may seem like extra paperwork, but it's a very important part of using the hidden job market. After you've talked with 20 people in a week, you will find it difficult to remember who was who.

Following are a sample card and notebook page.

SAMPLE: FILE CARD

Sandy Jackson 222-5555
Chief of Housing Permits, Rochester County
2211 W. Main Road, Wilmington, MO 33533

1. Sent letter of intro, 2/15/95
2. Follow-up call, 2/15/95. "Too busy"
   Referred me to Jack Wong

SAMPLE: NOTEBOOK PAGE

Bill Forman 111-2561
200 2nd St, Willmington, MO 33532

— was a housing inspector, switched to independent housing lobbyist —

1/20 — Saw BF speak at Housing Conference. Believes more $ should be spent on community housing

2/17 — Sent letter asking for an info. meeting

2/20 — Called to set meeting date. Gruff but agreeable

2/25 — Met for an hour. Talked about the industry. Advised me to focus on non-profit and community groups. That's where state $ is going. Gave me 4 names to call. Bill Abernathy, Shirley Sampson, Nagita Holcolm, Jim White

57

2/26 — Sent thank you letter

Whether you choose a card or notebook system, you need to record all your meetings and their outcomes, as well as the letters and phone calls. Once you've set up your system, you'll find this takes only a few minutes per meeting. But it will save you much confusion later.

You also need to keep copies of all your letters. In the notebook system, you can put the letters behind the page for that person. Otherwise, you can keep them in a folder in chronological (time) order.

TO-DO LIST

After you've noted the call or meeting in your records, you need to note the next step. You can do this by creating another column on the note page or index card, or by keeping a separate to-do list. For example, Terry Jones' to-do list might look like this:

SAMPLE: TO-DO LIST

—Intro letter to Jack Wong, say Sandy Jackson referred me	2/28
—Call Jack Wong to set meeting	3/5
—Meet with Bill Abernathy 11 a.m.	3/3
—Send thank-you to B. Abernathy	3/4
—Meet with Shirley Sampson 3 p.m.	3/6
—Send thank-you to S. Sampson	3/7
—Call Bill Forman to touch base	3/15
—Call Patricia Brown, set interview, if possible	2/26
—Intro letters to N. Holcolm, J. White, tell them Bill Forman referred me	2/28
—Call N. Holcolm, J. White, try to set up meetings	3/5

59

That's a lot of things to do. Hard to believe it all started with three introductory letters on February 17. From letters to three strangers, Terry has already met with one person, and has referrals to five more — including two meetings already scheduled!

It's true that none of these meetings are job interviews. But it's just a matter of time before one of these people hears of a job and thinks of Terry. That's how you get to be in the right place at the right time — by being in a lot of places, all the time.

CALENDAR

Terry's next step is to arrange the items on the to-do list on a calendar or daily activity sheet. That's the only way to be sure everything gets done. You may choose a calendar for daily, weekly, or monthly activities for your own use. Or you can make your own by photocopying pages with lines on them. Following are samples of each common style. These pages may be a bit small, but feel free to copy them for your use.

SAMPLE: DAILY CALENDAR PAGE

Monday, February 28

To Do Today

7 _____

8 _____

9 _____

10 _____

11 _____

12 _____

1 _____

2 _____

3 _____

4 _____

5 _____

6 _____

7 _____

8 _____

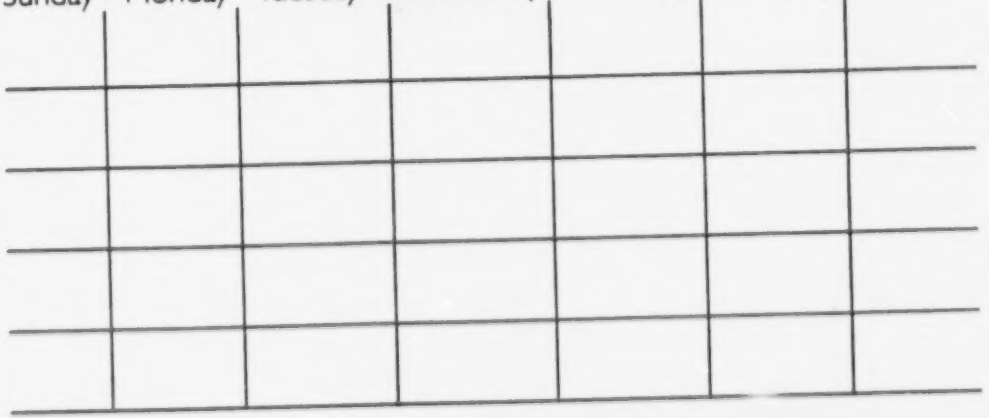
9 _____

61

SAMPLE: WEEKLY CALENDAR

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8							
9							
10							
11							
12							
1							
2							
3							
4							
5							
6							

SAMPLE: MONTHLY CALENDAR



Chapter
FIVE

Mind Your Manners

Since the hidden job market is really just people doing favors for each other, it's very important to use good manners. People are more inclined to help — and hire — people they like. And it's very difficult to like someone with bad manners.

Here are a few tips. If you follow these ideas, you will impress everyone you meet.

Always say thank you — So simple, yet so easy to forget. Put your thank-you in writing and everyone will know you said it.

Always do what you say you'll do — If your contact invites you to a meeting and you say you'll be there, be there! Don't leave your new friend standing by the door feeling foolish. An invitation may sound casual, but they may be planning to introduce you to someone important. Honor every commitment you make.

Keep your calls and meetings brief — It's always better to leave them wanting more time with you than to overstay your visit. Be polite and business-like with your calls and they might even call you next time.

Treat your contacts like friends — Send your contacts a newspaper clipping or cartoon once in a while, just like you would a friend. Show them it's a two-way street — that they can rely on you, too. And always tell them if you come across news that would be helpful to them.

Share your successes — Don't just fade away when you get your new job. Call or write your contacts, thank them again for their help, and tell them how things turned out for you. This is more than polite. It's also a way to give something back. Now they know they can call you for advice or a favor, or just to have lunch together.

Help others — Make time for other people who ask for a meeting or advice.

Remember, every good deed you do comes back to you. Help someone today and they may help you tomorrow. People helping people is what the hidden job market is all about.

A LAST WORD

If you follow these steps, you will get a job. It's that simple. But there's no guarantee that job will be stable. Keep up your contacts even while you're working. The more friends you have, the softer your landing will be if this job disappears. Make the hidden job market a part of your life and you'll have the only real job security there is.

Good luck!

66

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Helpful books for job seekers

From the *Pocket Job Series*, Prototype Career Press:

Five Steps to Your Next Job
Resumes Etc.
Job Interviews: 10 steps to success
Job Search Over 40
Financial Survival Between Jobs

Other helpful books:

300 New Ways to Get a Better Job, Eleanor Baldwin, Bob Adams Inc.

A Big Splash in a Small Pond: Careers in small companies, R. Linda Resnick, Simon & Schuster

It's Who You Know, Cynthia Chin-Lee, Pfeiffer & Company

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INDEX

Advertisements 2, 3, 4-8
Association meetings 22, 33-37
Chamber of Commerce 9, 23
Cold calls 25
Follow-up calls 33, 46-49
Goal-setting 10-11
Informational interviews 39
Interviews 7, 39, 55
Job security 62
Letter of introduction 38-45
Network 12-26
Newsletters 9, 28-29, 36
Part-time jobs 24
Record of contacts 52-54
Reference checking 7
Research 27-29
Schedules 29-34, 54-59
Schools 9, 23
Thank-you letter 50-51
Volunteer 24, 34-37

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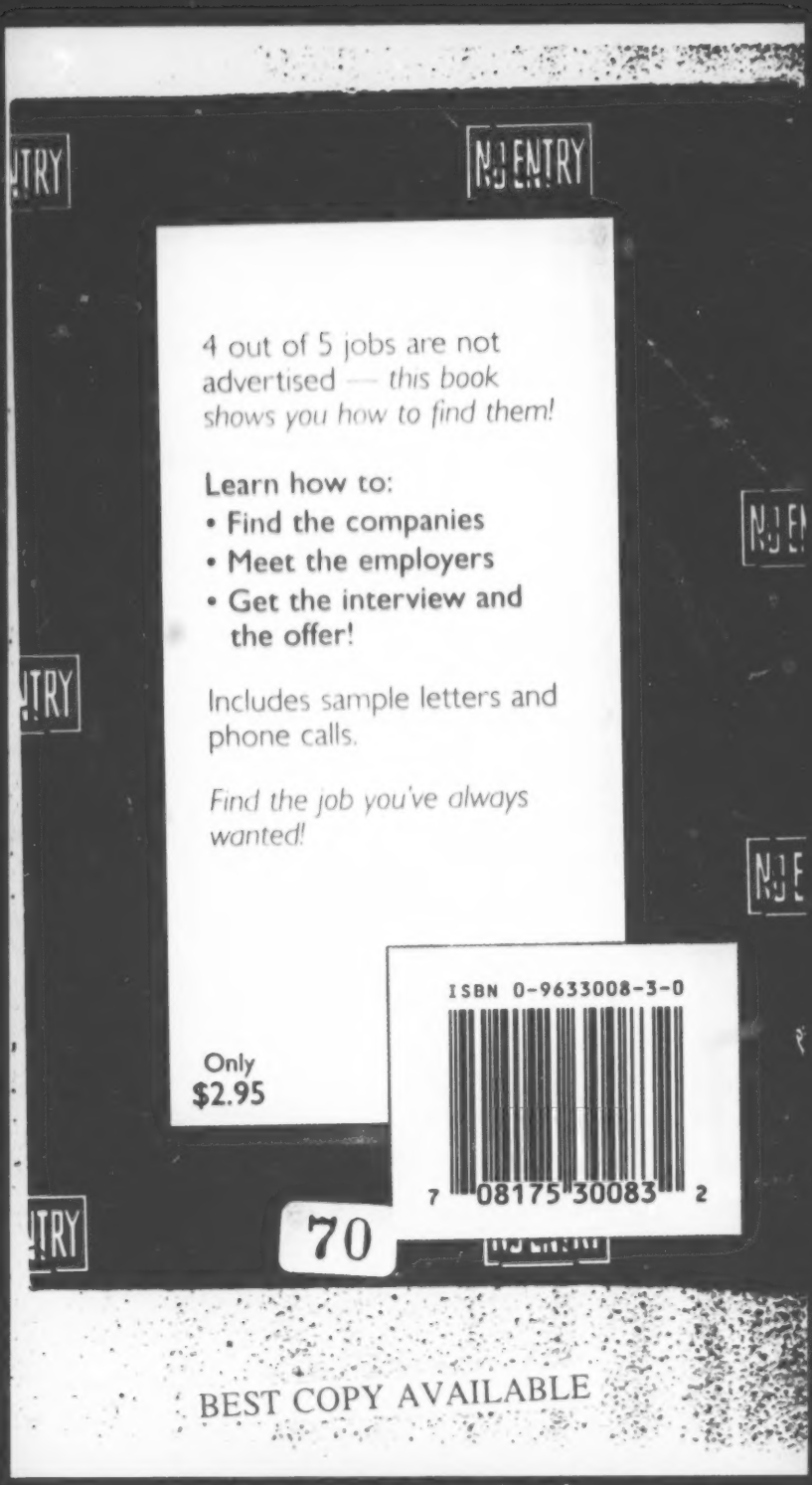
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